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# Improving 4-H CLUBS

**4-H Studies Point the Way to Better  
Organization and Functioning.**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## A COOPERATIVE PUBLICATION

This leaflet is intended to help you—a county extension agent or local 4-H Club leader. It should give you a better idea of how you can strengthen 4-H Club work in your county or community.

The findings published in this leaflet were assembled through the combined efforts of the State and assistant State club leaders in the Northeastern States working through a committee composed of—

Albert Hoefer, State club leader, New York, chairman;

Allen Baker, State club leader, Pennsylvania;

R. P. Davison, until February 1949 State club leader, Vermont;

Mylo S. Downey, State club leader, Maryland;

Florence Howard, assistant State club leader, West Virginia;

Irma Winkleblack, until April 1949 assistant State club leader, Connecticut;

Rollyn P. Winters, State club leader, New Jersey; E. W. Aiton, 4-H field agent, Northeastern States, Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture;

Mrs. Laurel K. Sabrosky, extension analyst, Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

The committee reviewed the 4-H Club studies listed in extension bibliographies and reviews. The studies selected as containing reliable information and being applicable to 4-H work were distributed among all the State and assistant State club leaders in the Northeastern States. They studied and reviewed this material at their regional meeting in November 1949.

As a result of these reports, the committee requested the author to assemble findings regarding organization and functioning of the club unit in this publication. This was done with the help of Mr. Aiton and the Art Unit of the Federal Extension Service.

# Improving 4-H CLUBS

By LAUREL K. SABROSKY, Extension Analyst

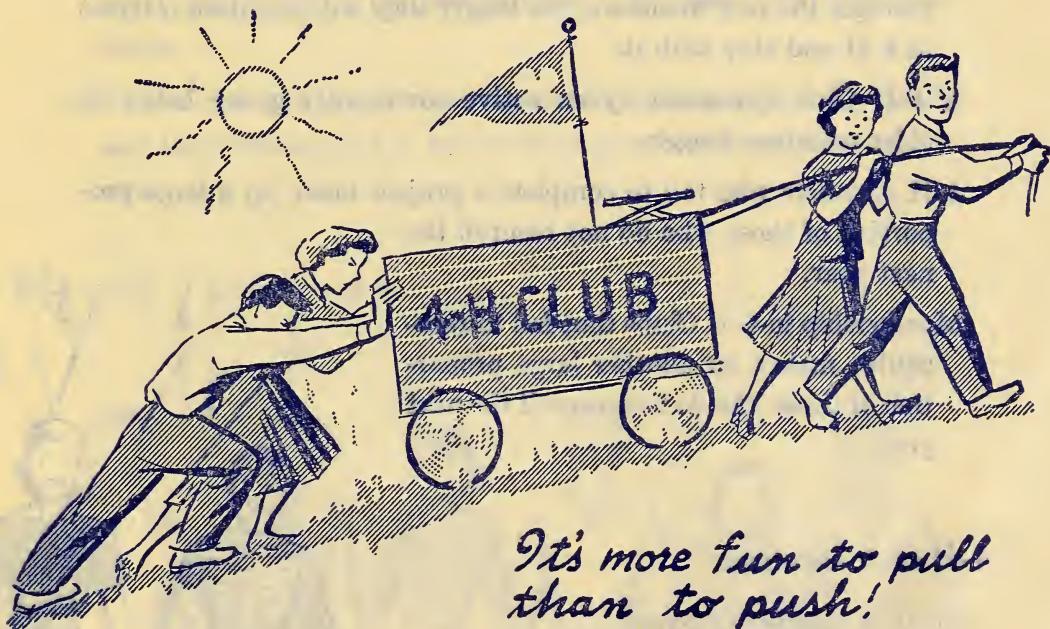
Two principles of social activity and group participation apply closely to 4-H Club work:

Any person takes part more wholeheartedly in any activity if it is his—if he helps to plan it. If he originates the idea, his participation is at its best.

Any person maintains his interest in an activity if he is taking part in it.

The professional extension worker and the local leader are a team; the extent to which each carries his share of the load determines the success of the 4-H program.

Opportunity must be provided for every 4-H member to do something besides his project work. A general activity program serves a real purpose here.



*It's more fun to pull  
than to push!*

## **Vitality of 4-H Clubs**

A 4-H Club asked for by a community lives longer.

More 4-H Clubs disband during their first 3 years than later on.

Give new clubs special attention.

A large new club lives longer than a small new one. Try to get 10 or more members at the start.

A large old club lives longer than a small old club. Try to keep up membership.

A 4-H Club lives longer if it takes in new members every year. Don't let club size decrease.

4-H Clubs in which most of the members complete their project work are the ones that live longer.

## **Reenrollment of 4-H Members**

Enroll new 4-H members at the age of 10 when possible. The younger the new members, the longer they will maintain interest in 4-H and stay with it.

A 4-H Club sponsored by an active community group holds its older members longer.

4-H members who fail to complete a project make up a large proportion of those who do not reenroll the next year.

Membership in 4-H Clubs that fail to reorganize makes up another large proportion of those who do not reenroll the next year.

## **4-H Club Meetings**

Meet in members' homes.

Hold meetings in the evenings, when members are 14 years of age and older.

Use most of the meeting for work connected with projects, but make the business and



recreation parts important, too. See that every member has a chance to participate in something, if only singing or games.

Club officers and committees should function actively. Start giving responsibility to members in their first club year.

Provide opportunities for members and leaders to help plan the program and activities.

During business meetings, members should have the chance to discuss and make decisions about local events, activities, participation in outside events, and their own problems of membership, reenrollment, and project completions.

Year-round meetings are most satisfactory, even if they are held less often or are merely special ones, during certain seasons.

## Projects

Encourage completion of projects. Failure to complete a project sets a child back in his development. He loses some self-confidence.

Give local leaders special training in the reasons for record books and their values, and in how to help members keep them up-to-date.

4-H we sing to you!



## Local Activities

Hold social events for members and for parents.

Hold exhibitions, demonstrations, and other 4-H affairs for the public.

See that every member has a part to play in them.

## County or District-Within-County Activities

Each club should participate in several activities during the year.

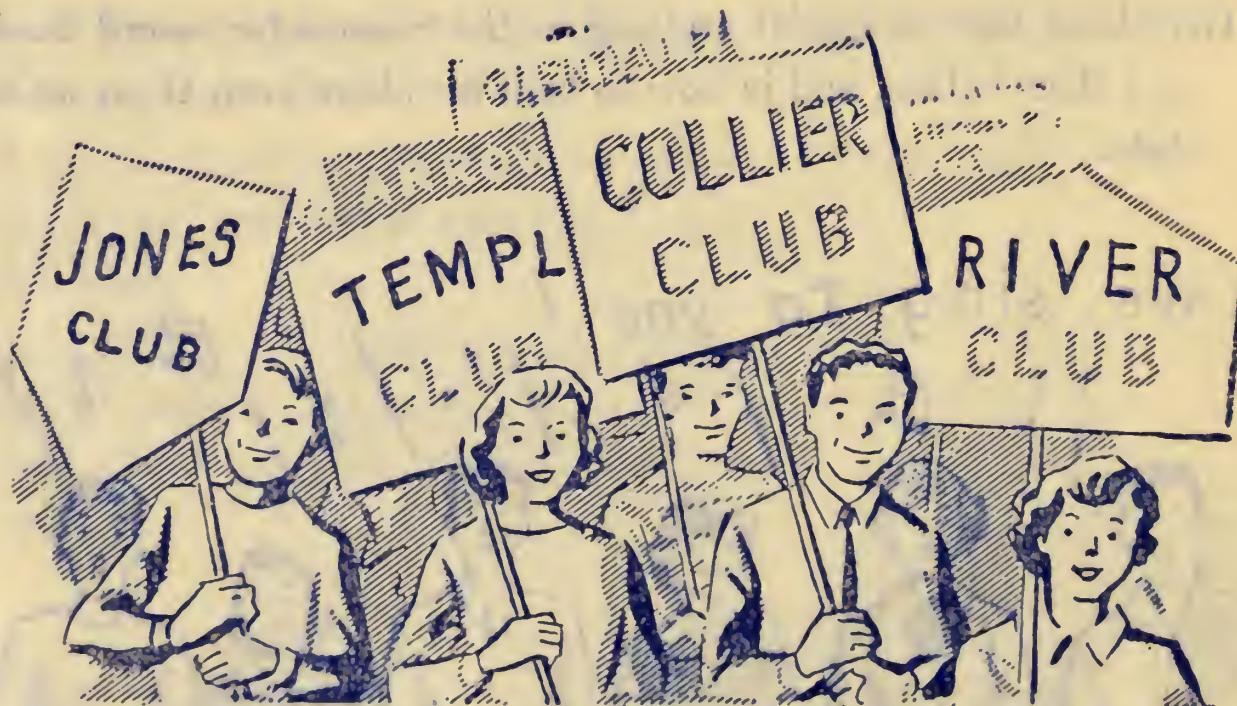
Arrange for the attendance, if not actual participation, at some events, by all members, nonwinners as well as winners; non-completers as well as completers.

Be sure that local leaders, council members, and club representatives participate in the planning and carrying out of the affair.

Plan so that some phases of each event will involve participation of every person in attendance: Singing, group discussion, games, and other group activities.

As soon after the event as possible, the planning group should evaluate it, and make suggestions for changes for the following year.

Each event should have something in it that is different from the last year's event.



**Studies from which these findings were taken:**

**ARVIDSON, D.**

REPORT OF A STUDY OF COUNTY-WIDE 4-H CLUB EVENTS. 36 pp. La Fayette, Ind., Purdue Agr. Ext. 1948. (Processed.)  
Digest of thesis (M. A.), George Washington University, Washington, D. C.

**FRUTCHEY, F. P., AND OTHERS.**

EDUCATIONAL GROWTH [in specified 4-H projects]. U. S. Dept. Agr. Ext. Serv. Cirs.: 391, 1942; 384, 1942; 382, 1942; 378, 1942; 369, 1941; 356, 1941; and 353, 1941. Washington, D. C. (Processed.)

**JONES, H. M., AND OTHERS.**

4-H CLUB WORK AND HIGH-SCHOOL YOUTH. 36 pp. Amherst, Mass., State Col. Ext. 1947. (Processed.)  
A New England cooperative extension publication.

**JOY, B., AND OTHERS.**

VOLUNTEER LEADERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE 4-H PROGRAM. [1938.] 29 pp. U. S. DEPT. AGR. Ext. Serv. Cir. 347. Washington, D. C. 1941. (Processed.)

**LOVEJOY, K. C., AND OTHERS.**

A STUDY OF HOW TO GET PARENT COOPERATION IN 4-H CLUB WORK; MAINE, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE, AND OHIO, 1947. 31 pp. U. S. DEPT. AGR. Ext. Serv. Cir. 450. Washington, D. C. 1948. (Processed.)

**STATE CLUB LEADERS IN IOWA, NEBRASKA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND SOUTH DAKOTA.**

**TURNER, R. A., AND JOY, B.**

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS FROM STUDY OF LOCAL 4-H CLUB PROGRAMS IN IOWA, NEBRASKA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND SOUTH DAKOTA. 34 pp. Washington, D. C., U. S. DEPT. AGR. Ext. Serv. 1941. (Stencil No. 1012-41.)

**THAYER, P. W.**

SOME FACTORS AFFECTING THE VITALITY OF LOCAL 4-H CLUBS. 72 pp. Washington, D. C. 1940. (Typewritten. Includes bibliog.)  
Thesis (M. A.), American University.

**YOUNGSTROM, C. O., SABROSKY, L. K., AND THE WESTERN STATES 4-H CLUB STUDY COMMITTEE.**

A STUDY OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING REENROLLMENT OF FIRST-YEAR 4-H CLUB MEMBERS—PHASE I. 11 Western States. (Unpublished.)

